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April 4, 2007

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Committee on Housing and Community Development held a meeting on April 4, 2007 with Chairman Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee members Aldermen Thomas Taylor and William White also present and voting. Also present were Alderman Dennis Sullivan as well as Phil Ercolini, Dana Lewinter and Maria Ortiz from SPCD and Scott Darling from the ZBA.

Ms. Lewinter addressed the members about homelessness in the city and said that a count is done every year with the City of Cambridge. Somerville has over 20 agencies working with the homeless and conducts monthly meeting to coordinate their efforts. In addition to providing shelter, these agencies advocate to secure funding from the legislature for additional services. During the city's intake process, assessments are made to determine the issues causing homelessness and the services needed. The city has an initiative to prevent and alleviate homelessness, similar to the City of Springfield's. Ms. Lewinter said that the goal is to move homeless individuals into permanent housing, of which there are only 40-50 in the city. Mr. Ercolini told the members that permanent housing is the most difficult to set up because neighborhoods are usually against it, because it's costly and because it also has a negative impact on a community. The city needs 350 beds to provide permanent housing. Alderman White requested that figures for chronic homelessness be provided to the committee and that a written breakdown of finances per program per homeless person.

The committee discussed the North Point project and Mr. Ercolini stated that the City of Cambridge hasn't yet informed Somerville where it is with its development and what services it would provide if Somerville's land in North Point is developed. Somerville's state delegation is against the governor's proposal. As soon as information becomes available, it will be forwarded to the committee.

Alderman Gewirtz's motion **that the Director of Strategic Planning and Community Development provide the Land Use Committee with information relative to the North Point development and the City of Cambridge's intent to provide services to Somerville** was approved.

Alderman White's motion **that the Director of Strategic Planning and Community Development provide the Land Use Committee with a written description of all programs, and their status, for which funding**

has been provided by the MPO under the Transportation Improvement Program and appear before the committee to discuss such programs was approved.

Alderman White's motion that the Director of Strategic Planning and Community Development inform the Land Use Committee when the state has finalized the "I Cubed" program and provide the committee with such regulations and information with regard to any application by Federal Realty Investment Trust for funding under such program was approved.

The committee discussed matters before it and took action on the following item:

**177497:** Order - Re: Somerville Neighborhood Protection Ordinance

**RECOMMENDATION:** Should be placed on file

**VOTE:** Unanimous, 3 - 0 in favor

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Alderman Rebekah L. Gewirtz, Chairman  
Committee on Housing and Community Development

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee on Housing and  
Community Development, April 4, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk